

Date: 2 May 2003

Interviewer: Kathleen Irving

Place: Searle home, 2558 W. 1500 N. Vernal

Kathleen Irving (KI): Milt, why don't you start and tell me your full name and your parents' names.

Milt: My full name is Milton Harold Searle and my parents' names was Raymond Milton Searle and Zina Batty Searle. They had four sons and one daughter and the one daughter didn't live but a day. Then I came along a month to the day after my father was killed with lightning on Diamond Mountain, on October 11, 1923.

KI: What was he doing up there?

Milt: He was moving a bunch of cattle. He and Sid Morrison was moving a bunch of cattle off of the rim of the mountain to bring them down to the valley after them being there all summer.

KI: You told me your birth date was in October or that was when your father died?

Milt: He was killed on the eleventh day of October. I was born on the eleventh day of November 1923.

KI: That must have been very difficult for your mother.

Milt: It was very difficult for my mother. After I came, the next spring, she took myself and my four brothers back to Diamond Mountain. They had filed on two homesteads. My mother and my father had each filed on a homestead. One of them was in the Blair Basin and the other was below what they call Willow Springs, on Diamond Mountain. I don't hardly know how to tell you where it is because so many of the people don't know Diamond Mountain, but Willow Springs is still called Willow Springs and it is just north of what they called the cow camp that was on the forest.

Anyway, she took us back there to the mountain. She lived in a sheep wagon. I guess she and my brothers dug post holes and made fence. They said it was very dry and they had to carry water. I think in Wood's [Woodey Searle, his brother] history it said several miles, but it was only probably a mile and a half to two miles that we carried water on our horses. Of course, I was just a baby, so I was just being tended. In fact, they said that I run around like a little Indian with no diaper, no nothing on. I guess it was just much easier for her to tend me that way. She didn't have as many diapers to wash.

They carried the water in a five-gallon can on one side of the saddle horn and then a five-gallon water bag on the other side of the horse. They would go down to what was called McKee Springs, which was just south of the Blair Basin, it's still there, a beautiful spring even today. They would fill those up and use that. They tell me that they never wasted a bit of water. The wash water, to wash your hands with and everything, was saved and put in the holes to soften the

ground up so they could dig the holes to plant the posts to make the fence.

KI: Will you tell me what your brothers' names were?

Milt: My oldest brother was Raymond, and the next was Carl Edward and then the girl, I think she was between Ray and Carl and her name was Maud and she didn't live but a day. Then there was Jay Lincoln and Woodey B. and me.

KI: How old was your oldest brother, Raymond, when you were born?

Milt: He was fifteen on the fifteenth day of October. He lacked four days of being fifteen years old [when my father died].

KI: So, there was a lot of burden on him, then, to go up there and work on that homestead.

Milt: Yeah, it was a lot of burden on him. But a lot of those shearers up there were very good to my mother and the boys and to me. Of course, I was implicated there, because, see, I would have been from November to spring, what, eight months old when they took me back up there.

KI: Did your mom ever prove up on the land?

Milt: Yes, yes. She proved up on the land. In fact, when she passed away, why, it was turned to my brothers Ray and Jay, and they split it up between them. When my mother passed away in 1962, she was a very conservative person and always really knew what business she had, and she had different properties around. She had different houses and ground up in Craig, Colorado, and the Diamond Mountain property and stuff and before she passed away, a while before, she put different properties in two of the boys' names. Each piece of property had two boys' names on it, around. After she passed away, I was on her checking account, and she told me to go down, when we could see that she was about to pass away, why, I was to go to the bank and draw everything out of her account. I went and did that except I left one dollar in it just to keep the account open.

Now, this is something that I am proud of about my family when I say that after my mother passed away, we went to her home in a few days and the five brothers sit around the table and we said, "Who wants this piece of ground?" We appraised it for what we figured each piece of ground was worth and, "Who wants this piece of ground?" In all of the dealings, checking around and so forth, there was not one unkind word in the family. The sisters-in-law, my wife and the other sisters-in-law, they went and did the same thing. They said, "What do you want? Is there something special that you want that Mother Searle had?" And they all said different things, every one of them said different things that they wanted. We never, ever had one angry word in all of our families, where so many families, it splits them up and they never speak to one another. I am very proud of family in this respect.

KI: Did your mother ever remarry?

Milt: When I was four years old she remarried a man by the name of W.H. Howard, William H.

Howard. He had sheep. I think he had two bands of sheep. I don't know what there was to a herd.

KI: I was just going to ask you how many there were to a band, thousands?

Milt: Well, I don't know. I don't remember how many he had. Maybe a thousand to fifteen hundred to a band. He had a place up south of Craig, Colorado, by the name of Pagoda. We used to travel, in the spring after school was out, we always came back down to Vernal to go to school in the winter, we used to travel back and forth from there to Vernal. In those days, why, the cars, from the fender to where you lifted up the side to look in to check your oil, it was handle that clicked and you lifted it up and it folded back. Well, I was deathly carsick and I would ride from Colorado to Vernal right out in between the motor and the fender looking out to the front because I couldn't stand to be on the inside of the car. I'd ride right out there. I just got deathly sick on the inside.

KI: Did you grow out of that?

Milt: Well, to a certain extent, but even to this day, if we was to go somewhere in one of these buses, like Wilkins Bus or the Greyhound or something, unless I'm sitting right on the front seat and then they've got to be going pretty straight, otherwise I still get deathly sick.

KI: Elva, you don't take this guy very far, do you?

Milt: Well, as long as I'm driving, I'm all right.

Elva: He's learned to put up with me driving a little, too.

Milt: Yeah, I've learned to put up with my wife driving a little bit. Maybe in a thousand miles, why, she gets to drive sixty of it or something like that.

Elva: We went clear to Cherry Hill, New Jersey, which is right close to Pennsylvania and Philadelphia, and they had tours lined up for us to go to Valley Forge. Valley Forge couldn't have been more than six or seven miles, but on that bus he got sick and it ruined the rest of the day for us. They had a lovely program that night. We'd taken our Indian girl with us and she and I went to the program and he stayed in bed.

Milt: Yeah, I couldn't stand it. But anyway...

KI: Well, where did your mom met William?

Milt: She worked for Ashton Brothers at the time and they were the largest department store from Salt Lake to Denver. They were a big department store. They carried all the sheep men and the cattle men from the time they sold their calves in the fall or they sold their wool in the spring or their lambs in the fall, they carried them on the books.

I don't know whether I'm getting ahead of myself or not, but this Mr. Howard, Dad Howard, as I called him because he was the only dad that I knew, when the Depression hit, he

lost everything. He had just mortgaged everything to buy another band of sheep, another outfit of sheep and stuff, then the bank called his loan and he never had the money to pay for it. So, he went bankrupt. At that time, he, like many others, owed Ashton Brothers. They'd carried him for a year's supply of groceries for their camps and stuff.

Well, later on, he was able to get a hold of a piece of ground over in Colorado and they built, Mother and him built kind of a little store there. It wasn't much of a store, but Highway 40 was being built, the road crews were there, so my mother, she cooked for the road crew. He would come over to the Vernal area and buy small calves and take them out over there into Colorado and keep them until they got big enough to slaughter, then he would slaughter them and take them into Ashtons. He paid off his bill that way. There was a lot of people that never, ever paid Ashtons off. But he was an honest man, a good honest man, I'm really proud to say that. He was a good honest man, W.H. Howard.

KI: Did he die early or did you know him all your life?

Milt: I knew him all the time. They lived together up until...

Elva: She died in 1962 and he died just a few months before she did.

KI: So, he was just your father.

Milt: Out there, Skyline is what we called the place. When I was young, I think it was probably the year of '35 so I must have been thirteen, the summer of '35, maybe it was before, I don't remember just when it was now, but anyway, there wasn't anything much for me to do there. So, I said to my mother that I was going to go to Craig and see if I could find a job. I was just a kid. I had fifty cents in my pocket and I hitchhiked to Craig, Colorado, and a fellow there that I knew that had been down over by Massadona, I stayed with him up there that night.

The next morning I went to where the sheep men, the best hotel, hung out there. There was some of them in there and I asked if there was anybody that needed someone to work for them. Ray Smith, he was a big sheep man, his father's name was Moroni Smith and he was very wealthy. But anyway, he give me a job. He took me out to his ranch, which was south of Baggs, Wyoming, on the Little Snake River. He give me a job there. I fed bum lambs; I don't know, forty or fifty bum lambs. We had a trough and bottles with nipples on them and we'd push the lambs out away from the trough and then put all the bottles in the holes along there and after those lambs got to be a little big, why, they'd hit them nipples and all the milk would be gone out of there.

I did garden work and milked cows and did that kind of stuff. Then this fellow, Ray Smith, had a wife that couldn't keep any help. She always had a hired girl, but she could only keep them for a week at the most, then they quit her. So, I don't remember how it come about, but she wanted me to come in and scrub her kitchen floors and do some stuff and I said, "No, I wasn't hired to do that work." So, I quit and they took me back to Craig and then I come on back down to Skyline. I don't remember how long I was there. It was a month or two I was there on the ranch before I had the blow-up with her.

KI: Is that why she couldn't keep any help?

Milt: She couldn't keep any girls to help her at all. She just was miserable to get along with. From what I've heard, I've got a brother-in-law that was in partners with one of their sons on sheep, and from what I've heard from him over the years, why, she never did improve much. But I didn't ever see her again, I don't think I ever saw Mary again.

KI: Let me back up here and we'll bring Elva up to speed, then I'll ask you about going to school. Elva, will you tell me your parents' names and when you were born, brothers and sisters.

Elva: I was born the first of July in 1925. My father's name was Lamond Caldwell. My mother was Eleanor Viola Allen. I was the oldest child. I had a brother, Markel, and Raymond, and Donald. I was eleven years old before I got a sister and that was Monta Rae. Then we had another brother, Arlo. I remember being very unhappy when Arlo was born. I didn't think we needed another baby.

KI: How old were you by then?

Elva: I was fourteen and I had had to help with all the babies and the diapers and all the things, and I was very unhappy. I was very naive because I didn't realize until just a few days before Mom had the baby that she was pregnant again. Anyway, Arlo got to be my pet. He was like *my* baby. When we got married, he was still my baby and I made such a fuss over him that Milton couldn't hardly stand him for a while.

KI: Where did your family live at the time?

Elva: Right up the street. I've lived on this street [1500 North] all but about four years of my life. Except it was just Maeser then. We moved a few times and then my family got a chance to buy a little place with a two-room house on it with a little shanty thing built on the back that was just big enough for a bed and a cupboard that could hold clothes that were folded. We were really cramped up because there were eight of us by then. They were so worried about being in debt. They bought that place for \$850. It was four acres and the little house.

My dad said, "I'm not sure we'll be able to pay for it." But the next spring he started shearing sheep and if you were a pretty good sheep shearer, you could make a bunch of money, bunch for that time. And they had the place paid off long before the note was due. Of course, as soon as they got that paid off, they started thinking about building a house. My mother had two brothers, Carl Allen and Lawrence Allen, and Austin White was another one, he was a good carpenter. They went to the mountain and got out the logs to build Mom a house. It didn't take them very long to get it built. They just jacked up that little two-room house, put it on some logs, and rolled it forward so they could build right where that had been.

My brother, Donald, has that home today. He's remodeled it a lot since my mother died, but he's made a real nice home out of it. It was a nice home before. It was a little bit inconvenient, but he had a lot of wonderful ideas. He's a good carpenter, too.

KI: Where did you live when they were building the new house?

Elva: We still lived in the two rooms and it was summertime. In summertime Dad would build a granary out in the back and us older kids moved our beds out into the granary and slept out there for the summer. I remember one night of waking up and mice were running across my hair. But we slept out there that summer while they were building the house and before Christmas we were able to move everybody's beds down in the basement. They fixed the basement so we could have it warm. But they didn't have the top finished. The top wasn't finished when we got married. They had a couple of rooms finished up on the top.

KI: How old would you have been when they started to build the house?

Elva: I was probably sixteen.

KI: You got married when you were eighteen?

Elva: Almost nineteen. But we got our bedding and things moved out and we still had the two rooms in front and when we took out the beds, it left us room. We had lots of room for a Christmas tree that year. That was exciting.

KI: Do you know about what year that would have been?

Elva: It was probably 1940. We moved into the house in 1941, right after Pearl Harbor, because my grandfather died that year, too, my mother's father. So it was in '41 when we moved.

KI: What did your dad do?

Elva: Everything. He herded sheep; he mined coal; he helped on the threshing machines; he hauled hay. But when they started building the house, this Austin White, that was a good carpenter, started showing him a lot of the things that he needed to do to be a builder and he became an excellent carpenter. In fact, he helped in building the house that Mrs. Meagher [Nick Meagher's wife] lives in on South Vernal Avenue. He helped with that one; he helped with quite a few houses around. In fact, they were working on the Meagher house when he had that heart attack and died. It was almost finished.

KI: Well, let's see, where did you go to school then?

Elva: I went to Maeser until the eighth grade.

KI: Tell me about that school, what it looked like and what you remember about it, your teachers, if you remember.

Elva: I had Miss Johnson for first grade, Miss Hall for second grade, Lola Smith Christensen was my third grade teacher. Mildred Bailey Hacking, who is in the [Uintah] Care Center now, she was my fourth grade teacher. Miss Wells. We never did learn their first names, they were just the teachers. Miss Wells was the fifth grade, and Carl Preece was my sixth grade teacher, and Clark Larsen was my seventh grade teacher. Thomas Caldwell, we just called him Tommy, his son,

Weston, just died, he was my age, he was our eighth grade teacher.

There were a lot of changes came to that old school. I don't remember how the bathrooms were when we first went there, how the restrooms were, but I think I might have been in third or fourth grade when they finally built onto the back of it and fixed a better heating system and new restrooms. Later on, before I was out of school, they built a fire escape from the top floor down.

My mother went to that school, and all of her children went to that school, and all of our children went to that school.

KI: The old one?

Elva: Yes. They tore the old one down while we were on our mission in 1977.

KI: How many grades were downstairs and how many were up?

Elva: Four were down and four were up. When we had crowded classes or when we had music classes, there was a little extra thing up in what they called the belfry, where the bell rope went up through. I remember a teacher named Mr. Taylor taught us singing lessons up in that room when I was in about seventh grade.

KI: Did he keep the seventh and eighth graders together?

Elva: No. It was built with a classroom on each corner of the building, and later on they built the kitchen in between the first and second grades downstairs, in the south end of the building.

KI: It had been just a hall?

Elva: It had just been a big hall, yes. The fifth grade was upstairs on the south and east corner, the sixth grade was on the northeast corner. Seventh grade was on the northwest corner and the eighth grade was on the southwest corner.

KI: What I meant was, did the eighth graders all stay in that one class, all the time?

Elva: All the time. You know, when we went to high school, of course, we were the little dummies that didn't know any of the town kids. I didn't know anybody downtown except one or two people. My great-grandfather lived downtown, and Milt, and he was from *town*. But when we got down to high school, there were about eight or nine of us from that eighth grade that were the top students.

KI: That's interesting. You went to high school down where the swimming pool is now [approximately 630 West 200 South]?

Elva: Yes.

Milt: Then right to the north of there was the old building, which was the Academy at one time. We went into both of the buildings.

KI: Do you remember any games you used to play at school?

Elva: Yes. We used to love to play ball out in the field, baseball. I wasn't ever very good at it, but I thought I was a good pitcher. One day I pitched the ball to Glen McKeachnie and he hit it and it hit me right there before I ever knew that he did it. It just knocked the breath out of me and set me right on the ground. I didn't like to play ball after that. It really hurt.

We were in the fifth grade when Glines Ward came to Maeser to school. There was Burnell Haws, Glen McKeachnie, Betty Curtis, Leola Allred Woehrman, she lived in Glines. There were a big group of kids that came.

KI: Did they bus them over?

Elva: Yes.

KI: When you went to high school, did they bus you down there, too?

Elva: Yes. And I used to be late for the bus every morning. I was a quarter of a mile from the corner where the bus stopped. The bus would leave the school over there and I'd leave my house up here and I'd run like the dickens! He never did leave me.

KI: Do you remember anything particular that happened in school, a memory that stands out?

Elva: I remember we used to have programs and Don and Cliff Wardle would sing. I thought I could sing then, too. I remember one day I was going to sing a song. Of course, we didn't have a piano in the room to give us the pitch or anything and I got a pitch too low. Oh, I was embarrassed because I couldn't even reach that low note down there. Now, I can't reach any of the high ones.

KI: Were the programs just for the school or were they for your parents?

Elva: Sometimes they were just for the class. We'd have a rest period time or something.

KI: Do you think that your discipline was pretty strict with your teachers?

Elva: Yes, yes, it was, but we needed it. It is a lot different today.

KI: It is. Well, Milt, tell me where you went to school since you're a "town boy."

Milt: I went to the old Central School to start with.

KI: When you went to school, since your mom and William were over in Craig, were they only there in the summers and they'd come back in the winters?

Milt: In the summers and then they'd come back. My mother owned a home right where that

Freight Damaged store is, just to the west of that, just a fraction, she owned a home there. We would come back and stay there in the winter and go to school.

Now, Elva didn't mention in her talk about going to school and the kids being able to walk across the top of fences in the snow from up there where she lived over there. They could walk on the snow, it was crusted enough in there. Us downtown, why, there was a fellow by the name of Joe Winward, and he had a little triangle apparatus made out of wood and poles of some type, as I remember, and he hooked one horse to it. He would do the walks, scrape them, because the snow was quite deep in those days. We haven't seen anything like we used to see as kids, I mean, for many years. We don't see this kind of snow anymore. We had lots of snow. Of course, part of the time, we kids, me being smaller, why, I'd fall in behind some of the other kids if he hadn't been up that way, if he hadn't got out early enough in the morning for us to go to school, why, the older kids would make trails and we'd go down there.

We'd go down to the Bank of Vernal corner and then turn south, then go down that way, went to school there.

KI: When you were in elementary school, did they just have one class of each grade or did they have more than that?

Milt: No, they just had the one class of each grade.

KI: Did Central also go through eighth grade?

Milt: No. We went to the sixth grade down there in Central. Then we moved up to the high school and had seventh and eighth. I'm satisfied we did because John Stagg was the sixth grade teacher and Blaine Lee was the fifth grade teacher.

KI: Did they have mostly the junior high kids in the older building and the high school kids in the newer building at the high school? Do you remember it being like that? I think Rhoda DeVed told me that one day because it was a big deal when you got to go over into the newer building.

Milt: I think that the seventh and eighth was probably in the old, what was the Academy building, to start with.

Elva: Well, when I was a freshman I had two classes over there. I had Mr. Lybbert and Mr. Richens. Over in the old building.

KI: But the rest of your classes were in the new building?

Milt: Yes, the rest of our classes were in the new building. But, like I said, we just went to the sixth grade down in the Central School. What did they call that old building where Miss Johnson and White were, that old building that was south of the old Central School? It was the old school there. When I first started in school in there, there was another building south of the old Central School. Actually, there were two buildings. One was a brick building, square building, with a hip roof. Then behind it, I think Beulah Freestone taught back there, in that building back there. But when I went into the third and fourth grade, it was over there. Vera Johnson Vanleuvan was my

teacher in the third grade. Then Pearl Schaffer, she taught a mix of third and fourth and Iris White, on the south, in that building, taught a full fourth grade. Then we went over into the other building for Blaine Lee upstairs and John Stagg for the sixth grade up there in the other building at that time.

Of course, we played marbles and we had cigar boxes. We'd cut a hole in the top of the cigar box and play eye drops. You'd take them and drop them. If they didn't drop their marble through the hole, why, we got to keep it. If they dropped it through, then you'd have to give them a marble. Of course, we played baseball.

KI: Did you have any playground equipment?

Milt: As I remember, we had a kind of deal with four handles on it with a pole in the center. We had that. You'd hold onto these and run, then swing and go out around like that. As I remember, there was four pieces of cable down with handles that you'd take and run and throw yourself around. Then we had what we called the monkey bars. Boy, when you got to where you could skip two or three of them at one time, you was pretty hot stuff, I'll tell you. You were really good when you could just start out and grab one and swing clear over and miss one or two, you was really good, I tell you. I'd forgot completely about that, but that was a lot of fun. I used to like those monkey bars, as we called them.

KI: Did you ever get in trouble?

Milt: Well, not particularly, no. Tommy Freestone and I, he's a first cousin to me, and there was a girl there by the name of Grace Lopez and we teased her and called her Little Papoose. I don't know whether I ought to tell that. Once we was outside and Tom said, "Little Papoose!" and started to run and she picked up a brick and threw it and cut the back of his head. She was a Mexican girl, Grace Lopez. Then I was in studying, supposed to be studying, one day and she sit right behind me. I just turned around and said, "Little Papoose," and she hit me right in the back with the back of her pencil. I don't know whether I'd been eating beans or not, but I tell you, talk about an explosion! I was so embarrassed! I think that she might have been a little embarrassed, too, but that's about the only real trouble I ever did get in. I just turned around and said, "Little Papoose," and turned back around and she whacked me in the back with that pencil. I'll always remember it. Vera Johnson Vanleuvan was my teacher at that time. It was sure an embarrassing situation for a kid, you know, in the third grade. It was quite an embarrassing thing.

KI: How about you, Elva? Did you ever get in trouble at school?

Elva: Not that I remember.

Milt: Not my wife!

KI: That's what I thought you would tell me. Do you remember the kids who did get in trouble? What kinds of things would they do, because being disrespectful to your teacher, for example, was pretty bad.

Elva: Well, we had one or two that used bad language and it seems like they were always in trouble.

KI: When they were in trouble, what happened to them?

Elva: I don't know. We didn't like them very well.

Milt: They weren't very popular with the rest of the group.

KI: Do you remember teachers spanking?

Elva and Milt: No.

KI: Even back then that didn't happen?

Milt: No, they didn't spank us at that time.

KI: So, Elva, tell me about high school. What did you do there? What kind of activities did you like besides the regular subjects?

Elva: Well, the first year I was taking speech. Of course, the kids who were taking speech could join the La Masque Club, the drama club. My folks didn't have a car. There was no way for me to go to a night meeting at the school. But over on Fifth North, the Carrolls lived over there, and Don Carroll was in my speech class and he was going to join the club. He said, "You can ride with me." So, I think I only went to three or four meetings that winter. I don't know why I missed the others, but I did go and I was in that.

KI: Would that have been when you were in ninth grade?

Elva: Yes. The initiation for the La Masque Club: when I got down there that night for that, this little green kid from out in the country that didn't know anybody or anything, I walked in the building and there were the rest of the kids and they said, "You've got to go get a raw egg." I walked out on the front steps and there was Milt. Now, he had been going with my mother's sister, my mother's youngest sister, so I knew who he was. But he looked at me and he said, "What's the matter?" And I said, "I've got to go get a raw egg and I don't know anybody." He said, "Come on. My mother will have one." At that time they were living down in an apartment in a little house.

Milt: First South right across from the stake center, that church house, those houses on east of where the parking lot is now.

Elva: So, we walked down and got that egg. He was so nice. He had me walk on the inside of the sidewalk. I'd never walked with a boy before. When we crossed the street, then he changed to the other side so that he was on the outside all the time. We went back for me to be initiated and somehow or the other he made it so I didn't have to swallow that raw egg and all the other kids

did. I remembered him with a very soft spot in my heart.

KI: Why did they do that?

Elva: They had kind of like a spook alley type thing and you had to swallow a raw egg and you had to feel grapes that had been peeled and that kind of stuff. That was the first night, then the next night they had a banquet and everybody had to wear formals. Well, I didn't have a formal. My folks couldn't have afforded one. So, Charlie Colton's daughter, Edna, she said, "You're about my size and I've got an extra one. I'll bring mine and you can put it on when you get here tomorrow night." It was pale yellow. I dressed up in that and we had the dinner and the party afterward and he kissed me upstairs.

KI: I thought he was going with your aunt?

Elva: Well, he kind of flitted around!

KI: How old was he then?

Elva: He was a class ahead of me. He was a sophomore. That was the end of that. Nothing ever developed.

KI: Right away.

Elva: No.

KI: Do you remember any other clubs you were in, when you got older? Were you ever in band or any music groups?

Elva: No. I was never in any music groups. I took Home Ec. Of course, most of the girls took Home Ec. My mother had taught me to sew, so I felt like I was wasting my time in Home Ec. Then I got a real bad sick spell the year we had to make this special dress and everything for ourselves. I was sick and home for two or three weeks. Miss Bateman let me take it home to finish it and I finished it at home on my mother's sewing machine. I enjoyed wearing that dress. It turned out really nice. I always loved to sew.

When I was a junior, of course that was right after the war started, our speech teacher that year left to join the Army and Isabelle Batty became our teacher. I wrote a play. I thought I was going to be a real author and poetess and all of that stuff. She helped me a little bit with the play, then she said, "We'll put it on for our spring thing." So, we did. I got to play the part of the main girl and that was kind of fun.

That same year when we had our seminary graduation, I wrote the words to—I don't remember the song I used, but it was a hymn-type song and I wrote words that went along with our seminary graduation that we sang for that.

School was fun. I really enjoyed it. I liked giving readings. I could memorize readings that were twenty minutes long and never have to be prompted. I did a cutting for our graduation from a play that was in one of the books that was in the speech department. The night that I gave

that reading, before I got up on the stage, I tore it up so I wouldn't have anybody prompt me. Now, I can't remember what it was about and I wish I had it.

KI: What year did you graduate?

Elva: 1943.

KI: So, that was right in the middle of the war, the United States' involvement in it. It was two more years before it got over. Did a lot of the guys that you graduated with go straight into the service?

Elva: A lot of them went before we graduated. A lot of them didn't stay for the graduation ceremony, they just went.

KI: Do you know whether they enlisted or were they drafted?

Elva: No, they enlisted.

KI: Which brings us to you, Milt. Can you tell me about your high school experience and then military service.

Milt: Well, she told you about the La Masque Club and I was in a couple of the plays that we put on. I was stage crew manager for the props and things that we used. I was manager of that. I used to play tennis. They had tennis courts out there on the west side of the old high school.

KI: Did you ever compete with other schools at that time?

Milt: No. No, we just played for fun.

KI: Did they have any organized teams where you played with other teams, football or basketball?

Milt: Basketball. In the fall of '39 we took the state championship. In fact, Ken Sowards, that just died, he was one of the lead five. Ken was good and Joe Miller and Charlie Murray, the Hadlock brothers, LeGrande and I can't remember the other. That was in '39 and then in 1940 I started to school in the fall of my junior year and I decided I had taught those school teachers everything they needed to know and that I would go and give the Navy a chance at my knowledge, I was so damn smart! So, I went and joined the Navy.

KI: Could you do that without your parents' permission at the time?

Milt: No. I was seventeen and I wasn't doing anything in school. I was hellin' around a little bit. I wasn't causing any trouble, except I just wasn't doing the things in school that I should be doing. Anyway, my mother said, "If you'll stay and finish school, I'll buy you a new car." And I said, "No, I don't want to stay that long and finish school." So, I joined the Navy. That was in

1940, just a year before the war broke out.

KI: Tell me how you went about enlisting. Could you do it here or did you have to go to Salt Lake?

Milt: I had to go to Salt Lake and enlist out there. I joined the Navy and went to San Diego.

KI: Why did you choose the Navy?

Milt: Well, I really don't know except I thought that it was the best between the Army and the Marines. I thought that was the best place to go. You would always, supposedly, have a clean place to eat and sleep, whereas with the Army, you was out on treks and field trips and all this stuff and eating out in the sand and sleeping in the sand and all this kind of stuff. Right now I don't know as I give it a whole lot of thought, other than the fact that I wanted to go in the Navy. Well, Chuck Murray and Wilde, what was his name? Do you remember the Wilde boy, down to Jensen? He joined the Navy. Some of the fellers a year or two before, they'd gone in and they'd come home on leave in their dress blues and they looked pretty sharp. I said, "Well, I'll join the Navy." So, that's what I did. I went to hospital corps school.

KI: Did you choose that or did they assign you?

Milt: We took tests and they said, "You're qualified for something else or for the hospital corps school, which one?" And I chose the hospital corps school. I went and graduated from corps school and my duty station was back down to the Naval Training Station there in San Diego. I stayed there.

Liberty was real good before the war broke out. We had one night out of forty-five that we had to stay on the base. The rest of the nights, why, we could be out cussin' around.

KI: And you did, huh?

Milt: Yeah, we did. I did that. Then war broke out. Before the war broke out, maybe we'd only examine between maybe ten and fifteen new recruits a day, then all we had to do was polish the dispensary floor and shine our shoes and get ready to go on liberty at 4 o'clock and be back at 8 o'clock the next morning. We had all night long. It was good duty before the war.

KI: Did you know at the time you enlisted that there was good possibility the United States would go to war?

Milt: I had no idea that we was going to war. It had never entered my mind. I was just for a good time was all that I was thinking about.

KI: And then they bombed Pearl Harbor.

Milt: They bombed Pearl Harbor on the seventh of December and from then on [things were different.]

[begin tape 337]

KI: Please, go ahead, so instead of fifteen a day you were seeing how many?

Milt: Oh, twenty-five hundred.

KI: A day?

Milt: A day. We would start real early in the morning and go until late at night and get up and start the next morning. In those days we had what we called an autoclave and it was filled full of shot needles. We had to change the shot needle for every shot that we give. This autoclave was probably fourteen or sixteen inches long and maybe four or five inches wide and so deep and it held, oh, I wouldn't even dare to think of how many shot needles it would hold. Then, after we'd use one to give a shot to one fellow, why, we'd take that off and put it into another place, then sterilized them again. We used the same needles, of course, time and again.

We lined them up in the dispensary, just like rows of corn. I can remember those fellers lined up, stripped off naked and we'd just go down along in there and shoot 'em and shoot 'em and some of them old big fellers would just fall over and pass out and you'd leave 'em laying on the floor and we'd go on. They'd come to after a while. A needle would scare them to death.

I was going to say, before that time, the Marines, they don't have any medical department. The Navy takes care of the medical men for the Marines. When I first went in, we got \$21 a month, then in four months, or three months, they raised us to \$36 a month. From then on it was up to us. When we advanced to the next rating, it was \$54 a month. We had more money than we knew what to do with in those days. Then the Marines, paratroopers, if you went with them and you made one jump, you got \$50 a month extra.

KI: Hazardous duty pay?

Milt: Yeah. So I put in to go with the Marine paratroopers and I never did hear anything from them. Then the war broke out, and I told you there about that, then along in February of '42, why, I got my orders to the Fleet Marine Force to join D Medical Company. Now, this was going to be a medical company that would put up a hospital wherever we went. Of course, we went on the trips with the Marines, just out through the boondocks, just trudging along. We kept up with them and took care of the calluses on their feet and so forth.

KI: Were you getting a lot of people being wounded?

Milt: Not at that time. See, this is while we were still in training at Camp Elliott, California. Just outside of San Diego. You come around from coming down from San Diego, down around Old Town, and then turn and go up on the hills out there on what was Camp Elliott at the time. Anyway, we went there. We trained there until the first of June, went aboard ship and made some practice landings, and I think the ninth of June of '42, why, we left out of San Diego, not knowing, of course, where we were going, except that we were supposed to be going to set the Rising Sun, which was the Japanese, of course. [Milt eventually served with the 1st Marines, 2nd

Regiment, 1st Battalion, Company B, then Company A as a Company aid man, medical corps.]

We went into Tonga-tabu, and I met a fellow there by the name of Moseses Mutai. He was a member of the Mormon Church. I got to talk to him for a little bit there. Then we went on over and made a practice landing in the Fiji Islands, because they wanted us to see what type of a jungle that we were going into, on the Solomons. We didn't know where we were going to hit, but we knew that we were going to hit somewhere. We didn't know we were going to hit Guadalcanal then.

Then we went back aboard ship and on the morning of August 7, 1942, why, we went down over the cargo nets and into our Higgins boats. There was eleven of us that was detached from the hospital group and we went two to a company, two men to a company, as company aid men for different companies. I went with the machine gun company and we hit Florida Island. There was just a Jap outpost there and we got rid of them, and then set our machine guns up. Florida is quite a large island and it encircled Tulagi Island and Gavutu and Tanambogo and Makambo. It encircles those islands.

Anyway, we set our machine guns up on this little ridge or whatever. There was waterway between here and Tulagi. The raiders hit Tulagi and we hit over here before anybody else did. We hit there just at daylight. When we went off the ship, we took enough provisions with us and clothes to last us for seventy-two hours, then we were supposed to be back aboard the ship and regroup and go get replacements that we would have lost on the islands, then hit another island. But that wasn't the way it happened.

We hit there and we stayed there, on Florida, and nobody tried to come across to us, so they called us back, supposedly back to the ship. While we were on the way back to the ship on the Higgins boats... In those day we had Higgins boats. Nowadays you see these boats that they go in with a load of Army or Marines or something and the front end just falls down. In those days, all we had was like these fishing boats that we have out here. There was [nowhere] to load. You went out over the side in those days. Just straight into the water, out either side or wherever you fell out to.

KI: Very exposed?

Milt: Very exposed, yes. Anyway, we got back towards the ship out there and they got the coxswain on our boat, he got the word to take us over to Gavutu. They'd brought these paratroopers in in Higgins boats because there wasn't a place big enough. This Gavutu Island was very small. When I say very small, I mean probably, oh, maybe five hundred yards long, but it come up in the air quite a little bit. These Imperial Marines [Japanese] that was on there, they had honeycombed this hill so that, actually, they had passageways that they could go back and forth and shoot out into our boys that come in. They had killed a lot of the paratroopers that had tried to come in there.

Eugene Baxter, and I'll tell you more about him later, he sit out on the front of this Higgins boat that I was in and tried to direct our boat in toward the beach, but the tide was out and the coral was just barely under the water, so we couldn't make it. Some of the fellows went out of the Higgins boats. There were big spaces between the coral, where it was deep, way down. They had all their equipment on and they just went right on down.

Anyway, we backed out of that, and the Marines on around, they had captured a little jetty that come out there, and we pulled into that and they told us to go. Now, this is Gavutu and

Tanambogo, there was a causeway right between here that, when the tide was out, they could walk back and forth between these two islands on. They told us to go around here and come in over here and hit Tanambogo because there was a lot of Japs over there and it was a fuel depot place for the Japanese. Well, when we got around, over close to it, and we was just headed up onto the beach, a destroyer that was shelling it, hit this fuel dump that was there. It just exploded. It just silhouetted us really there, and the Japs that was in their house there, they was peeling out of there.

So we said, "Come on, let's get out of here! Get out of this boat!" Back in those Higgins boats, they were water-cooled and they had probably two- or three-inch pipes, two of them, that went around into the Higgins boat that drew water in to keep the engine cold. I was right back to the back and on one side of the motor, it wasn't this wide, and we was hunched down. I said to these fellers, "Come on, let's go!" And they had both been hit by a machine gun. One on each side of me was dead. One of my feet had got down between those pipes some way or another and I was stuck there and scared to death. But I finally got it out and got out over the side and onto the beach there.

There was a Captain Crane that was in charge of us there. I've never seen him since. I've heard of him, but I've never seen him. Anyway, he said, "Push back off! Push your outfits back off the beach! Get in and go back around to Gavutu!" So, some of us got back into the Higgins boats and some of us didn't make it back in. So they stayed in the water and we went back around over there and come back into that jetty over there. We stayed there that night and the next morning, why, just before daylight, these Marines that was left over there, they came around and rejoined us there.

We stayed there a day or two and we mopped up all those Japs that was there. We killed all the ones that was there on Gavutu and Tanambogo.

KI: Did you ever have to take any of these guys prisoner? Did you have to take care of them medically?

Milt: No, and I never got a chance to kill one of them. Whenever I had a chance to kill them, I was taking care of my own wounded. Like that night, when we hit Tanambogo, there, they was coming out of there. If I hadn't've been probably as scared as I was and been able to shoot, why, I could have got several of them. Nevertheless, I missed an opportunity there to kill some of them. Because for all the trouble they caused, I didn't ever have any, should I say, misgivings about killing them or anything. Because they caused us all the heartache and suffering that we went through.

But there was another fellow there, and he had been shot through both shoulders. A machine gun had got him, it went through both shoulders and it didn't hit a bone. His name was Lane Abbott. He was an LDS boy, very staunch. In fact, he'd joined the Marines to save enough money to go on a mission. He got shot through there and they took him back aboard ship and took him down to Wellington, to Silver Stream Hospital. Then they brought him back up at Christmas time and put him back with us.

The last of October, we were called from Tulagi. I should say, when we left Tanambogo and went over to Tulagi, why, our ships got the word that there was a Jap task force coming in on them, so they left us. They left us there and the biggest thing we had was a .50 caliber machine gun.

KI: How did you feel about that?

Milt: Well, it didn't make any difference how we felt. And we didn't have any food.

KI: Did you feel abandoned or did you just understand what had to happen?

Milt: Well, we didn't know just exactly what *had* happened at the time, but we see all of our ships pull out and we figured something was afoot and we didn't know what it was. The first night that we landed over on Tulagi, why, we were bivouacked in a Chinese cemetery, up on the north end of Tulagi, on the west side of it, I'd say. Of course, we were all trigger happy. Those fireflies! I'd never seen fireflies. There was so many of them, you can't believe how many. Of course, we didn't know what was going on and everybody was shooting. Well, you just stayed down, that was all because it was your life. If you stood up, why, someone was going to get you, that was for sure. So, we all just laid down and the Marines was shooting them dang fireflies.

Then there was Jap submarine that used to come in and hold reveille on us. He'd just come along, just out there a little ways, and shoot in at us, and we didn't have anything we could shoot back out at 'em, that Jap sub. See, we'd taken his base over there where he'd normally come in to be fueled and stuff. He was finished for that.

We stayed there until the last of October, still 1942. Then we were called to Guadalcanal to replace some of the Marines that had been fighting over there because they were still [fighting]. We'd killed everything that we had on our islands over there. So, we were called over there to reinforce them. And we did, we went and reinforced them over there. There was one Japanese plane that used to come over every night. We called him Washing-Machine Charlie. It sounded like one of them old gas washing machines, putt, putt, putt along. He'd drop a bomb down on us.

There's no way that one could ever express the feeling, until you hear it coming, there's nothing you can do. They told us to lay flat, don't run, above all things, don't run, because when that hits, the shrapnel is going. If it's coming down and it's going to hit you, it's going to hit you, but if you're laying flat, why, you have a good chance of surviving.

KI: That happened repeatedly?

Milt: Yeah, every night. We didn't have any planes then. Even though we had captured Henderson Field, which was an airport, why it had been bombed and so forth. But they only had the one plane. Now, I don't know where it was coming from, but it'd come in and drop a bomb or two, and then that was it for the night, it was gone.

Then we went on up along the, I believe it was the Tanaru River. We crossed there and went up and pushed the Japs on up along the coast, then up on the hills there. It was so hot that you could hardly breathe, up on top of those hills, because there wasn't any vegetation to speak of. They was just bare hills and it was terribly hot.

KI: Were there any native people on those islands?

Milt: Yes, they were there, but they were back in the jungle farther. When that all took place,

why, they just went back. In fact, while we were over on Tulagi, why, some of the natives would come over in canoes or their little boats and come along. They would sell us stocks of bananas or something. If we had any silver money, maybe a dime, they'd sell us a stock of bananas for a dime. Then when they got all of our change, then it was just the same. If you had a dollar or a five dollar bill, you paid just the same. They didn't give you any change back or anything.

KI: Probably the denomination of the money didn't mean anything to them.

Milt: No. Well, that was Tulagi. Now I'll get back over to Guadalcanal where we were. We was there pushed up along. While we was up on top of that hill one day, why, of course, all of our canteens were dry, we was out of water, and we knew that right down in the bottom down there, there was a little stream. So, I and I don't know how many of us went, but we gathered up a bunch of canteens and went down and we filled canteens. Luckily, the Japs didn't shoot at us then; we went back. But the next day when we made the push forward, right above where we filled our canteens, there was a dead Jap laying in this stream. So, that didn't make us feel too good about the water that we'd been drinking, but nevertheless, we didn't get sick from it.

Then we pushed up and we pushed a bunch of Japs out along the point and at that time, we'd got a little kind of a cannon sort of a thing, I don't remember what it was, but it had what they called grape shot. We pushed them right out onto that point and killed all them there. But one Marine, he'd got out a little bit too far ahead and he'd got shot and he called for a corpsman to come.

This buddy of mine, Eugene Baxter, and that's who our son is named after, is this Eugene Baxter, he was a big fellow and he went and picked up this Marine up and brought him back over. There had been a fire there at one time and there were some big dead logs there, black logs, and he just laid that Marine down over that other side and just stood up and a Jap shot him through the heart. So, he was left there. He was my closest buddy, the closest buddy that I had over there.

With him, why, he'd been in the Navy sixteen years then. I'd just joined in 1940 and this was 1942. See, this was getting close to the end of '42. But anyway, we went on, we pushed on up and we pushed ahead farther than the command post thought that we were. They sent aircraft up and there we were out in this opening, and they strafed us. Luckily, they never hit one of us. It was a miracle.

Anyway, there was two of these LDS boys there, and this one boy that they brought in to us, he had his head taken off, about like that, just with a piece of shrapnel, the whole top of his head was just gone. Of course, there was nothing you could do for him. But he laid there all afternoon.

KI: He wasn't still alive, was he?

Milt: Yes, he was still alive. But you couldn't do a thing. The top of his head was gone, but his heart was still beating.

KI: He wasn't conscious, was he?

Milt: Oh, no, no, he wasn't. He was out of it. Then we started back. I had a captain by the name

of Furhop, Winthrop Furhop. I always remember it because it was such an odd name, Winthrop Furhop. He was from Texas and his executive officer was a Captain Miller, from Washington. He was the executive officer. We stopped back down in the trees a little ways as we were headed. The Army had come up to relieve us and they took our positions and so we was falling back.

The Japs had one big gun up there, we called him Pistol Pete. He'd lob them shells over. You could hear them coming. They say you never hear the one that gets you. Well, we had stopped to rest, going back, and Captain Furhop had just called us to move out and I had stood up and went to pick up my medical bags and I heard this whistle. I remember that I hollered: "Hit the deck!" And I fell. The only thing I can figure is that I must have hit the ground the same time the shell did, because I could put my hand in the hole that it made. It killed eleven men around me, including Captain Miller. He had a big piece of shrapnel go right through his heart there. Captain Furhop had that leg taken off right there and there was just a little piece of skin left there. I cut it off.

In those days we had sulfanilamide and sulfathiozole. That was all that we had. We didn't have any of this new kind of stuff that they had later on. I put what sulfanilamide and stuff that I had in there and put a tourniquet on his leg. A jeep come by and we loaded him on there and sent him back, but he died three days later with gangrene, this Captain Furhop, a good man.

We pulled on back down, that was Christmas Day of 1942, and we didn't get any dinner while we were there, on the Canal, and they put us aboard PT boats and took us back over to Tulagi. We hadn't seen our hospital group since we left San Diego, you might say, because we went with different [companies]. We went back there and joined up with them. Then we went later on, in February of '43, why, we were evacuated to Wellington, New Zealand.

KI: When people died like that, when that shell hit, did you have to leave their bodies behind, or did you take them with you?

Milt: No, we left them, we left them like that. We couldn't do anything about them right then, no. We left them.

KI: So, you got down to Wellington.

Milt: We got to Wellington and we went out to a place called Peakakariki. The New Zealanders was building what they called built-up tents, with a wooden floor and then a frame around, just a frame, and you brought the tents over and down to the side. You've seen those kind. We were there.

We went in there and all of our group, we had malaria, and I had pneumonia and malaria together. I was pretty sick there for a while.

KI: With all those close calls you had, almost dying, it would have horrible to die of pneumonia.

Milt: Yeah, but I got shook up there when that shell it. That was the worst thing that happened to me, I mean other than having these Marine boys shot on each side of me and things like that that happened to me.

There was one other thing that I should have told you about way back earlier when I was younger. Should I put it in now?

KI: Sure, because I can move it.

Milt: Okay. When was, oh, I must have been in the seventh or eighth grade, something like that, I don't remember, I wasn't in the ninth, my brother, Ray, had a herd of sheep. It was in the winter, and he had them out here, down in the Twists. He was married and had a wife and a child, so on the weekend, he would come into town and I would go out and stay with the sheep. When he came in one night, evidently a Friday night, he come in and told me to tell Gene Woodruff something, I don't remember what it was. Anyway, it was out there on 1500 South and between Fifth West and Vernal Avenue. There was big rows of cottonwood trees out there. They had been cut down and logged up in log lengths and they were just all over out in there, with just a trail down through there. It was early in the morning and I was on my horse. I could guide him with my knees. Right on that Reader Corner, what we called the Reader Corner, 1500 South, right there you turn and just fall off that a little bit. Well, it had snowed just that much that night and it was cold. I had my hands in my pockets and the stirrups were too long for me, so I had my feet back in the fenders, so that they didn't just hang down.

Just as this horse started to turn there, he started to trot down there, it was icy and his feet went out from under him and he fell. I thought that I was free of him and I started to crawl away when he got up. My left foot had gone back through the fender and I was hung up with him. I had the reins tied over his neck, there. As I was going along over there, I seen this feller go down the road ahead of me, on a horse, just little ways ahead of me and, of course, I didn't know who it was or anything. But I tried to talk to my horse. My reins were tied over his neck and I couldn't reach anything and I was just dangling underneath him. He was a tamed horse normally, but, of course, that scared him, falling down and everything. He started to drag me down there through those trees and then I started to holler. This fellow's name was Martin Fletcher, the father of Helen McKeachnie and also Mrs. Curtis. He was riding a horse that he was just breaking.

But someway or another, he was able to get alongside that horse and hold him long enough that he was able to reach down and pull me up and get my foot loose out of that saddle. As I remember, I was so shook up that I couldn't walk. He tied his horse up, I'm satisfied, and kind of helped me, or carried me, back up to Gene Woodruff's, that's that first house as you turn down that lane now, on the right, it's a white house there. I stayed there for a little while and got myself under control a little bit, and then got back on my horse and went out and took care of the sheep.

I've had several things in my life that have been very close. When I was overseas there, this fellow I told you about that got shot through the shoulders, when we left New Zealand, we went up and hit the island of Tarawa. We lost more men there in seventy-two hours than we lost in the six months on Guadalcanal. A fellow by the name of Aaron Daniels, from over here on the reservation, he was killed there. Aaron was killed there. A good Indian boy, a tremendous Indian boy. He never give me no trouble at all. Some of them was goldbricks and they would do anything to get out of going on patrols over there. They'd come and tell me that they were sick or something and they needed me to give them a chit that they wouldn't have to go on patrols, but this Aaron, never one time. He was a good boy. Then, I come home.

KI: Did they just let you out after New Zealand, or did you come home on liberty?

Milt: I come home, got home in March of '44. I wasn't released, I was still in the Navy. Here again, you can't describe the feeling that comes to you when you come under that Golden Gate Bridge after you've gone through all we went through. There you went under that Golden Gate Bridge and there was that United States, all that it meant to us. So then, I landed there at Treasure Island. I didn't have any clothes and I borrowed a gunner's mate uniform. I was a pharmacist's mate and I borrowed a gunner's mate uniform. We left Honolulu just the day before pay day, so we never had a nickel, a good share of us fellers. So, I borrowed a nickel to call. It so happened that my mother and step-father was there in California, in Oakland. I called them. They didn't know that I was anywhere near the United States. Neither one of them could talk to me. Anyway, Dad Howard's boy, John, my step-brother, he came and picked me up. I'd borrowed the nickel to make the phone call. Then I come home.

KI: Then he looks at you, Elva. Let's wait for him to come home and you tell me what you were doing during all this time.

Elva: Well, I graduated from high school and I went to work at the Ashley Valley Market.

KI: Who owned it?

Elva: B.P. Fisher owned it when I started, but then his uncle, Don Batty, and several other men, went in together and bought it from Mr. Fisher, so I still worked for Ashley Valley Market.

KI: Where was it located?

Elva: Right there where the Maverik station has been [northeast corner of 500 West Main]. It was a new grocery store and it was fun to work there. I put out stuff and I waited on customers and helped wrap meat. They had lockers. Back then, everybody had a locker at the market where they could put their frozen meat because we didn't have freezers at home. During the war, you couldn't buy anything like that anyway. But they had lockers and people would bring in their meat and Mr. Gray would cut it and we'd wrap it.

KI: Just meat they grew themselves?

Elva: Sometimes, and in the fall we wrapped a lot of deer meat and labeled it and put it away in the lockers for people. By spring I was getting kind of burned out, by March, and I thought, "I'm going to get another job. I'm not going to stay here any longer." So, I told his Uncle Don that I was going to quit. He said, "Elva, you're just tired. You go home, spend a week with your family, and then come back."

KI: They were still living on this street?

Elva: They were still up the street. They didn't have a car.

Milt: Nor telephone.

KI: So, where were you living?

Elva: I had an apartment in town. Before, I had walked to work from Maeser. It was almost four miles. Of course, at noon hour, I would go on down to my Grandfather Merkley's. His home was where Mid-town Auto is now [approximately 300 West Main]. But anyway, I used to go down there for my lunch hour because he was my great-grandfather. I don't know how I got home, but I went home and by the end of the week.

I went home to be with my family the day that he came to town. He had ten days and he told me he had made up his mind to go with a different girl every night, and he made it until Friday night. I came back to work on Thursday and my girlfriends and I went down to the little bowling alley. They had a little duckpin bowling alley and it was located about where the Chalet or one of those places along there was [approximately 67 West Main].

Milt: Right across from the old post office.

Elva: We went in there and he was there in his uniform just looking so dapper. He had a girl for the night and when he saw me, he said, "How about going out with me tomorrow night?"

KI: Even with the other girl standing there?

Milt: I don't know where the other girl was, but I was going with somebody else.

Elva: I said, "Sure, sure, I'll go with you." So the next morning, because I was working for his Uncle Don, Woodey [Milt's brother] was around and he and Woodey came through the store, right after I got to work, and he said, "Oh, by the way, there's a prom at Alterra. That's where we're going tonight on our date." And he was gone.

Well, I turned to my girlfriend who was working with me and I said, "I don't know what to do. I don't have a formal and I don't have money to buy one." There probably wouldn't have been one in town that I could have bought anyway. We used to drool over them in the catalog. She says, "I've got one. I'll call my mother and have her press it and you can wear mine tonight."

So, I went by her mother's on my way home and she had the dress all pressed and fixed for me and she said, "Now, Elva, this is a white dress, but it's not a wedding dress, remember that!"

KI: How old were you?

Elva: I was eighteen going on nineteen. I went home and got ready and he came and picked me up and we went to Alterra to the prom and that's the night he asked me to marry him. And he didn't go with a different girl the next night. He had one more night in town and we went to the school play. The school play was on and we went and sat in the balcony, in the old high school building.

He left me a note to take to Mr. Sather, who was the jeweler and a good friend, for me to go and pick out a ring.

KI: And you thought that was the thing to do?

Elva: Well, I guess I just liked to follow orders, I don't know! But anyway, I kept the note and I tried to get my mother to come to town to go shopping for a ring with me. By that time, my folks had got an old Model A Ford. She didn't drive and my dad was gone shearing. He went shearing and covered Colorado, Wyoming and up into Idaho. When they were gone, they were gone sometimes for... Well, the year before he hadn't been able to make it to my graduation.

But, anyway, I don't know how she got to town, but she did come to town with someone and she didn't agree with me that that was the thing to do. Everybody tried to talk me out of getting married. Milt's uncle said, "You don't want to marry him! He's not ready to settle down. You'll be sorry!" But, I went and picked out the rings and Mr. Sather was to send the wedding ring to him and I took the diamond. Well, \$70 was an awful lot of money to pay for a set of rings then, and I didn't know anything about jewelry. The only rings I'd ever had were from the five and dime store. So anyway, by that time my mother's sister was living with me. She worked at the telephone office. She teased me. She said, "This is real strange. He's not even here to put it on your finger."

KI: Is this the same sister that he'd dated before?

Elva: No, it was another sister. But anyway, when he got the ring that Mr. Sather sent him, it didn't have any diamonds in it. It just had the platinum setting, then the diamond was in the other ring.

Milt: It looked like a dime store outfit.

Elva: He called me and he scolded me. "What kind of...??" Anyway, six weeks later we got married, on the 12th of May. It will be fifty-nine years this May.

KI: You know, I am always, well, not surprised, I guess, but impressed at how many of these quick war-time marriages have lasted for decades. I think there must be a different marriage ethic, of 'we're in this together and we're going to make it work.'

Elva: Well, we always said that we're too stubborn, we were going to show everybody that we could make it. "We'll show 'em!"

Milt: I was engaged to a girl in Wanganui, New Zealand, when we were married. She was a beauty operator there in Wanganui.

KI: You married Elva and then you told her that you were no longer engaged to her?

Milt: Yes.

Elva: And he got the nicest letter back from her that said, "I didn't realize that people could fall in and out of love like this."

Milt: She was a nice girl. She was a beauty operator down there, a nice girl. She got married and had a nice family.

KI: Was the original plan that you were going to go back and get her after the war?

Milt: Yes.

KI: So, after you married, what did you do?

Milt: We went back [to the service] together.

Elva: After we were married, we went to Redlands, California, because that was where his new station was. He was the medical officer for the officers' training boys that were there at the University of Redlands. We had an apartment and he was about a mile from work. He walked to work and back and it was just like he wasn't even in the service.

Milt: Oh, it was a fun deal.

Elva: We had a six-month honeymoon, you might say. Then he got transferred to Virginia. He was going to stay in the Navy for twenty years, but he got transferred to Virginia and he had to bring me home because by that time I was pregnant. He was here ten days and then went on the bus to Denver. On the bus to Denver he wrote me a letter and he said, "I'm finding out this Navy life is no good for a married man. I'm getting out as soon as I can."

So, the baby was born the first of April.

KI: You were still in Virginia?

Milt: No, I had been transferred back to Long Beach, California, at that time. I'd finished my schooling down there. What they done, they transferred me from University of Redlands to Portsmouth Naval Hospital to what they called an independent duty school. We went to school down there to learn how to act under fire. Who did we have to teach us?

KI: People who hadn't been under fire.

Milt: People who had never been out of the United States! Oh, I'm telling you, it was the most ridiculous thing you've ever heard. All the bunch that'd come back with me, we all ended up down there in Portsmouth together and we all went to this school. We were all first class or chief petty officers. We had these brown-nosers that had brown-nosed the captains and stayed in the United States. They were the ones that were teaching us how to act under fire.

KI: Boy, that must have been hard to take.

Milt: Hoo! Was it hard to take! Terrible.

KI: How long was it before you were actually able to get out of the service?

Elva: He was out by July.

Milt: I got out on July 12th or 11th or something.

KI: Just the July after the baby was born?

Milt: Yeah, he was born Easter Sunday on April 1st [1946].

Elva: And when he was five weeks old, Milt had been sent to Oakland, California, by then, and I took the baby and went on the bus to Salt Lake. My mother about had a cat!

Milt: Oh, she about had a fit!

Elva: We got to stay in Oakland six weeks. We had our first anniversary and went dancing that night. Then he was sent to Farragut, Idaho, to be discharged and I got on the train again and went up there to him. Then we came home in July on the train and were met in Salt Lake.

Milt: We went to come home and I didn't do anything from July until the first of November. I'd had an allotment going to the bank all the time I'd been in the service, not a whole lot of money. Anyway, my brother, Carl, had bought a business, Searle Electric Company, and he wanted to know what I was going to do. I said, "Don't know." And he said, "Well, you can come in here with me and be in this business with me." So, I didn't do anything until the first of November, did I?

Elva: No. We spent most of our time on the mountain.

Milt: We went on the mountain. She said that my first love was that Diamond Mountain and she was my second love.

KI: So you were with both your loves together.

Milt: Yeah. We really enjoyed it up there. Then I come back down and went to work there at the store.

KI: What did you do there? Did you sell fixtures, or did you wire houses?

Milt: No, I sold the electrical wiring supplies and hardware. As appliances came on the market, we took on the Westinghouse line of appliances. I was in that business for fifty-two and a half years.

Elva: But you were only there eleven.

Milt: Yeah, I was down there eleven years in that, then I sold out my interest.

KI: The building where Searle Electric was, it was where Anderson Jewelry is now. [26 West Main]

Milt: Yes, where Anderson Jewelry is now.

KI: Then where did you move?

Elva: Where Freight Damaged is. [528 West Main]

Milt: Where that Freight Damaged store is. We were there for thirty years.

Elva: We moved in there the first of January 1956. We were there until Flynn moved the store over to Sprouse-Reitz was, where Milt's Ace Hardware is now [690 West Main]. By that time, we had turned the business over to Flynn.

Milt: Well, we went on a mission in the fall of '76. We told him when we left, "Okay, forty-nine percent of the business is yours. We'll either swim with you or we'll drown with you, whatever you want to do." He made a good go of it with the business. Of course, it was the drought the next year, the summer of '77, bad drought. We bought a hundred lawnmowers that fall for spring. When I got home in '78, he still had the biggest share of them left. We had that money all tied up in them that long.

KI: The name of your store was Milt's Merchandise, correct?

Milt: Milt's Merchandise Mart.

KI: What kind of merchandise did you sell?

Elva: Everything.

Milt: When we first got up there, in the spring, why, we sold baby chicks and we had what we called a hog's day. We bought a hog and had it out in front of the store and had people guess the weight on it. It was just something to draw people because we was just getting started in that business up there. It was something to get people started. Whoever guessed the weight of the hog, they got it.

KI: Let me back up just a minute here. If you went into Searle Electric in 1945, you said you were there for eleven years, so Milt's would have started in 1955?

Elva: '56, the first of January 1956.

Milt: It started in 1956. I think we were there, in what was the Saving's Center, for thirty-five years, then moved it over there. That would be about six and a half years in this other store.

Elva: In the meantime, in 1985, we sold our interest in it to Flynn. I was the bookkeeper from

1961, most of the time.

Milt: Never drew a paycheck in all that time; she never drew a paycheck.

Elva: We just took what money we needed live on out of the store.

Milt: And let the store grow. And we didn't know and our bookkeeper didn't tell us, like he should have done...

KI: Your other bookkeeper, not Elva?

Elva: No, I didn't know that much about that, I didn't do the taxes.

Milt: But he didn't tell us that you should write yourself a check for a pretty good figure, even if you have to put it back in the business.

Elva: It counts on Social Security.

Milt: When we retired, we drew minimum. She drew the minimum off of me and I drew the minimum because all we'd ever done was just take enough out just to live.

KI: That was a hard lesson to learn, wasn't it?

Milt: Yeah, and there was nothing you could do about it.

KI: So, this store was just general merchandise, all kinds of things, appliances.

Elva: We sold furniture and appliances, electric light fixtures.

Milt: Hardware, garden tillers, and then we sold Kubota tractors.

Elva: We sold draperies.

Milt: Anything that there was an honest dime to make in, we tried to get into it.

KI: Can you tell me about some issues you knew about in Vernal, as a merchant. Were you a member of the Chamber of Commerce?

Milt: Yes, we were a member of the Chamber of Commerce. We supported KJAM, the first radio station that come into Vernal, we supported that. We was a member of the Chamber of Commerce.

Elva: Milt was a member of the Roping Club, and we helped at rodeos forever.

Milt: We rodeoed for twenty-seven years and Vernal Roping Club was in that.

KI: How about the Knife and Fork Club, did you ever do that?

Milt: No, just what we eat with is all! Every chance we got, we either went to the rodeos or we went to the mountains. We wasn't a whole lot of socialite people.

KI: Did you have a place up on the mountain?

Milt: The Blair Basin was still my mother's. My brother Ray was there. Then he bought some ground out on the rim of the mountain, right close to where my father was killed there. We always used to, on the 24th of July, we used to have rodeos. That was a big gathering for the Searle clan on the 24th of July.

Elva: They'd have a bunch of calves and all the kids would ride calves.

Milt: In those days, why, the sheep men, they had pack strings of donkeys. They wouldn't take all the donkeys back in the Baldies with them and there'd always be a bunch of donkeys down on Diamond Gulch. In those days, there wasn't as many fences as there are now, and they just run free. We'd get a bunch of them in and ride them donkeys. Some of the women would ride the donkeys, we had a lot of fun as a family. We really enjoyed each other. Never had any diffuculties [sic], just no problems to speak of among our families at all.

KI: So, what kind of church service was there, with either of you.

Elva: Milt was a scoutmaster for eleven years and I worked in the Primary and Relief Society.

Milt: She was the Relief Society president.

Elva: He was a counselor in the bishopric when we were called on our mission.

KI: Where did you go on your mission?

Milt: Arizona Holbrook Mission.

KI: That was down on the reservation?

Elva: Yes. We spent eleven month with the Cibecue Apache. Cibecue was the stronghold where Geronimo fought his last stand, and those people there are very proud of Geronimo and that he withstood the whites for so long.

Milt: Very, very proud.

Elva: And they're hard to get along with, but we learned to love them.

Milt: We loved them, we still love them, I'll tell you. We still love them.

Elva: We go back once in a while, but it doesn't change.

Milt: They don't change.

Elva: All the ladies have their teeth knocked out in front because their husbands get drunk and come home and beat them.

Milt: Not all of them, but a whole lot of them.

Elva: The windows in the houses are always broken out.

Milt: Windshields of their cars and the windows in the cars are bashed in. They have a terrible time. But, they're good people, doggone it, they're good people. I mean, when they're sober, they're real good people. When we were on our mission, we were with the Apaches for eleven months, then we were called to be assistants to President George P. Lee, he was our mission president.

Whenever there was a new couple come into the mission, we were called to take them to where they were supposed to be set up there. Once or twice, maybe more, when we went back to see the couple, they weren't there, they'd gone home. Never called Pres. Lee or anything, they just packed up and gone.

I know how they felt because we had bought a new fifth-wheel trailer over at the ELI trailer park over there, and a new Ford super-cab truck to go on our mission with and when we got to where we were to go, there in Cibecue, with those Indian people, the right front wheel fell off of that trailer and if hadn't've, and I've told this many times, if it hadn't've, within three days I'd have been back to Vernal, Utah. Those people...

Elva: We got there when they were having a wake and the wake is just an excuse to get drunk.

Milt: And they all, I shouldn't say they all, but a lot of the men and they pass out along the roadways and they come want to borrow money from you. We hadn't been there two hours until they was knocking on our doors wanting to borrow money from us. I told them, "No, no. We wasn't sent here as bankers. We were sent here to help you." Well, they needed enough money to buy some sugar and some yeast to make homebrew. We said no. They didn't know that I'd been dealing with the Ute Indians all of my life. I went to school with them. I knew.

Later on, some of the brothers and sisters that we took down to Cibecue, they were scared to death of the Apaches, *scared to death* of them. They didn't want to stay at all, they didn't like it at all. We didn't want us to be transferred. We wanted to stay right there for the whole eighteen months. And they wanted us there. Those people, the stake president down there, he called President Lee and begged him to leave us alone, that we were doing a good job, and that everything was going good.

KI: What did you do with the people?

Milt: We were Welfare Service. I had a tractor, a Massey Ferguson tractor. I plowed for them. I

had two chain saws and a garden tiller. We planted gardens, cutting firewood for the aged people. They had a bunch of fruit trees down in there, apples and pears, apricots. We trimmed the fruit trees up. They hadn't been trimmed... I don't know when they was ever trimmed.

KI: Were you doing the same sorts of things, Elva?

Elva: I worked with the sisters.

KI: Were they actually members of the [LDS] church?

Elva: They had a branch. A lot of the people had been baptized, but they all went inactive. We made quilts, we did things with the Relief Society sisters. We helped with church on Sunday. Milt and I had the Primary going, that was an interesting thing. We started it and for the first six weeks we had a different group of children every week until, finally, the same ones started coming back. We had a good Primary.

KI: Did you enjoy that time?

Milt: Yeah, we enjoyed it, we really did. It was really enjoyable. When I started to plow down there in November, why, Sister Beatty, she said to my wife, "Don't Brother Searle know that we don't plow down here in the winter?" But the weather was good and I had the plow and I wasn't doing anything and to go plow these places and get them ready for spring, that was the thing that I knew to do. Of course, I hadn't been a farmer much, except just a little bit. I'd been a merchant all the time. But, I had gardened enough.

Elva: They said, "You can't grow tomatoes in Cibecue."

Milt: "You can't grow cucumbers." They loved them.

Elva: The only thing they planted was corn and it wasn't the kind of corn that we were used to planting. It was more like field corn, and they planted it in clumps. They'd throw a whole handful of seed in and it comes up in a clump and they never get any ears. So, we had one brother that had a big field and he said, "Nobody has ever plowed all of that field for me." He said, "I would like to plant the whole thing." And Milt said to him, "Brother Truax, I'll plow the whole thing for you if you'll let me plant it for you with a corn planter." So, he did.

It took several days to plow it and a day or two to plant the corn.

Milt: It was several acres, I don't remember how many.

Elva: But, we've got pictures of the corn when it was this high and when it was this high and when it was that high!

Milt: It was so high you couldn't reach the top of it.

KI: And it had ears on it, I'll bet.

Milt: Oh, yeah!

Elva: A lot of ears. Down there they dig a pit, build a fire, get lots of hot coals, then they'd put the corn in, put water on it and cover it up, steam it. Ooo, it smells awful when it comes out, but they love it.

KI: Does it taste good?

Elva: I don't know, we didn't taste it.

Milt: It smelled so bad that we didn't taste it.

KI: I should let you go and not tire you out. Is there anything else you can think of?

Milt: Well, I'm fine and dandy. There's other things that I'll think of, but that's all right.

KI: I hate to miss stories. Can you think of anything, Elva, anything you want to tell me about?

Elva: I know I'm still learning about it. Like I said, I grew up in Maeser. I knew the people on *this* street, from here up.

KI: Where was your church?

Elva: Right beside the old schoolhouse.

Milt: Right on the south of it there.

Elva: That was built when I was about three years old. The old chapel, they sold it to the school district and they used it for a training thing for young mothers or something for a while. Then they decided it needed to be torn down. It used to make us feel bad because we'd drive by and the young mothers would be out smoking.

Milt: Yeah, they'd be out smoking by our old church house. We didn't much care for that.

KI: I guess when you were younger, you just walked to church all the time, as well as to school.

Milt: Yeah, they walked.

Begin Tape 338, 9 May 2003

KI: This tape is part of a series begun on 2 May 2003. Elva, please describe for me what Maeser looked like and the people that were here when you were growing up, since you've lived on 1500 North all your life.

Elva: I have. When I was a little girl, I lived in the neighborhood of 1500 North and between 3000 and 3500 West. We lived at the place we called the Speirs place at that time because the Speirs people owned it and we rented it. The Speirs family had lived here and they moved to California. Their home was just to the west of my Grandmother and Grandfather Caldwell's home. It was nice to be there close to the grandparents.

Of course, in those days, when I was small, we walked everywhere we went or else we went with Grandpa in the wagon. Later on, he got a car and we would go with him in the car.

KI: Tell me your grandparents' names.

Elva: Frances Marion Caldwell and Effie Bird Caldwell. They were early settlers here. They were among some of the first people who came. The Birds came in 1883 along with the Searles. According to my grandfather's genealogy, some of his brothers and sisters were born here, so they were among the first people here.

KI: He was a descendant of one of the wives of Matthew Caldwell?

Elva: Yes. He was a descendant of the first wife.

KI: What was her name?

Elva: Barzilla Guymon.

The only store was Mrs. Rudge's little store over on the corner where the Truck Skins place, or whatever they call it, is now. Across from the 7-11 is now, the northwest corner of 500 North and 2500 West. Mrs. Rudge had a little store over there. She was a lady who had come from England. She was a sister to Mrs. May Jorgensen, who used to be downtown. If we had a fresh egg, we could walk to the store with a fresh egg and get a piece of candy.

KI: I'll bet that was a treat, huh?

Elva: Oh, it was. And she had the penny candy all in jars and you had to decide which one you wanted. But it was quite a ways over there. It was almost two miles.

KI: You didn't have horses, either, you just walked?

Elva: We just walked. Later on, Mrs. Rudge moved to town. I'll tell you about Mrs. Rudge. She had a parrot, and us kids just loved to hear the parrot. We'd go over there and she'd get it to talk, and it was real fun. But then, later on, she moved to town. I don't remember who took over her little store at first, but Verdin Johnson opened a store across the street at that time, too.

Milt: East.

Elva: There where the massage place is. [Northeast corner of Maeser intersection, 500 North 2500 West.]

Milt: They build doors there now.

Elva: Anyway, he had a store there and we went there for things. When I was a teenager, if we happened to have a quarter, my girlfriends and I, on a Sunday afternoon after church, we'd walk to the store and get a jar of olives. It must have been when the war was on because they put the olives in jars instead of cans. We'd buy a jar of olives and then we'd eat them on the way home. You'd have thought I'd have gotten tired of olives!

My friends were Beth Allen, she was my mother's cousin, and Freda Richens, she's Mrs. Ked Caldwell now, and Anna Bodily, she moved away from here a few years ago, she married a man named Morrison, lived out in Ashley. But there was quite a group of us girls that hung around together.

KI: You would have all gone to school together?

Elva: Yes. We all went to Maeser School, in the same grade. Once in a while, in the winter time, we got to go shopping in town once for Christmas. We'd save our pennies and try to think of something that we could buy for our family for Christmas. I don't ever remember what I bought.

When I went to work after I graduated, I made \$50 a month at the Ashley Valley Market and I felt like I was rich. I saved my money and I had enough money that fall that I bought every member of my family a nice gift from the catalog. I ordered it all from the Montgomery Ward catalog.

We didn't really get around and know all the people. We knew the people that came to church. But the people who lived over here on the hill by Doc's Beach Hill and those places, I didn't know where they lived. There weren't very many people over there on the hill at that time, but there were the Pitts and the Lucks and the Warbys. But I didn't know where they lived, because we just didn't get around that much.

Later on, my Uncle Carl Allen gave my brother Markel a horse. I would have been about, oh, fourteen or fifteen by that time, and my brother was three years younger. But, Mom's brother, Carl, gave Markel a horse. Of course, Markel rode it and Raymond rode it and I rode it.

By that time, my grandparents had moved down to 500 North on 1500 West, right there where the canal crosses the street, they were in that field. The old house is gone and everything now. They were across from Bert Merkley's, where Evonna Merkley lives now. They lived there for several years and then my grandfather died. My Uncle Carl lived there for several years after that. And my grandmother went to take care of her father downtown. Her father was George D. Merkley. She took care of him until he died. Then she married Mark Hall, who lived right next door to my mother, so that put her right back up in our neighborhood again. That was a good many years in happening.

I would ride the horse from my mother's place down to see Carl. This street that we live on here, from the mill corner down [1500 North 2500 West], I would estimate at that time, when I would ride the horse down, this street wasn't straight, it curved around. It hadn't been straightened up or anything, it was more like a path than a street. There were the Schaefermeyers and the Pitts and my grandparents and the Richardses and Joe Thompson, and that was about all the houses there were here at that time.

KI: Was the rest of it in farmland or was it just scrub brush?

Elva: Oh, there were farms and there was brush. When we moved to this place, the sagebrush... I've got some pictures of Milt riding the horses and the sagebrush up this street right here along that fence was as high as he and the horse.

KI: What year was it when you moved into this house?

Milt: 1950.

KI: Did you have it built?

Milt: It was an older house at that time.

Elva: Sterling Bodily had built it and he started with half of this living room, then he built on a little here, then he built on a little there, then he built a kitchen, then he built a bedroom. It was built one half of a room at a time. Of course, when we moved into it, we tore off the back half and burned it because it was nothing but junk.

Milt: Absolutely scrap, nothing.

Elva: Then we finished building on after we'd been here a year. We built on the rest of our house. One thing about this room, all the walls are solid log. When I put up my draperies, I couldn't screw the screws in, so I pounded nails and they're there to stay. They won't come down.

KI: Milt mentioned the mill.

Elva: The flour mill, Reynolds' Flour Mill.

Milt: You remember about that.

KI: You tell me what you remember about it, though.

Elva: I don't remember a whole lot about it, except the day that it burned. It burned on a Sunday morning and I remember someone said, "Where's the smoke?" And we ran to the street and my Aunt Isabell, who was at my grandfather's house, she was out on the street looking, so I went down where she was and we gradually got down closer and closer to where we could see it burning. It was quite an exciting thing. There's a picture of the mill on fire in the Daughters of the Pioneers [book].

KI: Were there other flour mills around or did people come up from town?

Elva: There was another one down on the corner where the Powerhouse Theater is now.

Milt: Fifth North and Vernal Avenue.

Elva: I don't know what power they used down there. The one that we had up here was run with water because the little stream ran down and turned it.

KI: Was it a waterwheel?

Elva: Yes. It worked with water. That's why that little stream was called the millrace.

Milt: Yeah, that's why it was called the millrace. We lived down in town, and we used to go down there to the mill. There's pictures of that old mill. I'd go down there and Jay Pack worked there. His wife was my Primary teacher. They had a boy by the name of Dee Jay. I'd go down there, you'd could buy sacks of bran and flour and everything, there at the mill. It was a big high building, there's pictures of it in the Daughters of the Utah Pioneers book. But we used to go and eat that bran, oh, that was good. That bran was really good, just handfuls of that bran, you know, and that's wheat germ. I mean, that's really good stuff for you. People, nowadays, they know more about that, you know, what that was. I say, "Well, I used to eat a lot of it."

KI: How long would it take you to walk to church on a Sunday morning?

Elva: Probably forty-five minutes.

KI: So, when you went down there, did you go for Sunday school, then come home and go back down for church in the afternoon?

Elva: We went to Sunday school. My father wasn't a member. My brother and I, when we lived clear up at that first place I told you about, we would walk to church and then we'd go home and we didn't go back to the evening meeting.

KI: I was thinking that that would be a lot of walking. What are these pictures?

Elva: This is a picture of a threshing crew and a thresher. My Uncle Arch Allen, my mother's uncle, owned that threshing machine and they used to come around. There was a lot of grain raised in the valley at that time and people took their grain to the mill and had it made into flour and everything and took it home again.

They would come around with the threshing crew. People would cut their grain with a binder and it would put the grain into bundles, tie it. Then they would put the bundles up together in the field.

Milt: You'd take one bundle in one hand and one bundle in the other and shove them together at the top, and two more, and bring them to the top there, and then you'd build your circle around.

Elva: Then they'd haul them on a wagon.

Milt: Right here's a wagon with it being hauled in. Then they would throw it.

Elva: They'd stack it. If they weren't going to have the threshers for a little while, they would

stack it in those stacks and the grain would be to the inside.

Milt: Yeah, the heads of the grain, always in to the inside.

KI: To protect it.

Elva: Yes. Then when the threshing crew came along and they pulled the thresher up there, they would take from every stack and thresh it and the straw would go out on that straw stack.

Milt: This is the straw stack out here that it's been blowed out on.

KI: It's pretty big because look at that little tiny guy standing on top.

Milt: He looks small there, but he's a full-size man.

KI: Where was this taken?

Elva: Well, these hills right here are those right over there [immediately west of the front of the Searle house].

Milt: That you can see right over there.

Elva: It was taken up in that next big block, I think.

Milt: It would be about 3500 West on Fifth North, back out in the fields there. That's where that picture was taken.

Elva: When you had the threshing crew come to your house, the lady of the house fixed the meal for all the men, and there were usually about thirteen or fourteen of them, maybe more. That meant a hard day's work for the ladies, to get the threshers fed. Sometimes, they even came for breakfast. They started early and you'd get up before daylight to get breakfast ready for them so they could eat and then be on to work. Then you'd fix dinner for them again about noon.

I remember once, before we moved down where my mother lived, and we were up by my grandparents, Mom had the threshers 'cause Dad had grain. I remember they didn't get quite through at night, so we had them the next morning. I had to put on the clothes that I had that I'd worn the day before and they were itchy because I'd been out where the straw had been going. Oh, I hated to put those clothes on that morning, but I had to get up and get dressed and help Mom with the breakfast.

KI: I'm sure that would be an awful lot of food to cook on a wood-burning stove.

Milt: Oh, yes. It was a lot of wood and a lot of work for the wife in those days, I'll tell you, because they didn't have all the conveniences that we have today. No refrigerators. They had ice boxes.

Elva: We didn't.

Milt: Well, no, but you had the ditch out it front.

Elva: We put things in a lard bucket or something with a tight lid and hung it underneath the little bridge that went across the ditch.

Milt: To keep it cold.

Elva: When we didn't have the ditch there, I don't know what we did, because the water wasn't in the ditch all the time.

Milt: The people used to drink that water out of the ditch. Nowadays, you'd just shake your head and say, "No, no, no way!" But you drank the water. In the water, the canals, they watered their livestock in the canals and their livestock would walk down into the canals. Invariably, why, if it's a bunch of cows, they'll mess in the canals. Yet, these canals went all down through the valley and at every corner there was a place that was smoothed out, kind of, for the teams to back their wagons down in to fill the barrels, because that's the way they would have to haul their water to their homes, to reach down and dip their barrels of water full and take them home. And that's what you drank.

KI: What happened in the winter?

Milt: Ice and snow. They'd melt it. Of course, they still had some water in the canals because you're coming down Ashley Creek, your water's still coming down through the canals in the winter.

KI: You didn't have a well?

Elva: My grandparents had a well, but we didn't.

KI: Did you get water from them?

Elva: We could get water from them.

KI: Milt, when you were a child, did you have running water downtown?

Milt: Yes, I lived right in town, there between Fifth and Sixth West on Main Street. We had running water in our house at that time. We had an outhouse out there somewhere, and I don't remember when that was, I was just a little kid. As I remember, we had a bathroom in that front house that we lived in when we come from Colorado.

Elva: We didn't. We hauled the water. After my folks moved to where my mother's home is now, it was just about the next year that the Maeser Water put in their water lines. So, we had water outside.

Milt: As a hydrant.

KI: Do you know about when that would have been?

Elva: I was twelve, about 1938 or '39 is when they put that water line in. It came down the street in front of our house. Of course, my dad was ready, he wanted to be one of the first ones to hook on to it. We didn't have water in the house, but we had one of those hydrants outside that you had to remember to lift it up so it would drain in the winter.

Milt: So it wouldn't freeze and break.

Elva: We could step right outside and fill our buckets with water and get water.

KI: It was such a convenience, I'm sure.

Elva: Oh, it was. It really was.

Milt: Oh, tremendous!

Elva: When it was bath night—we only bathed once a week, on Saturday—the baby got bathed first, then the next, and then the next, and I was the oldest, I always took the last one.

Milt: To save water.

Elva: 'Til I got big enough to get my own water and maybe figure out how to take a bath another time besides once a week.

KI: Where did you take the bath?

Elva: In the kitchen.

Milt: In a #3 tub.

Elva: In front of the stove.

KI: Did you have hair that was really long?

Elva: No, I never did have very long hair.

KI: Because it seems that would be very difficult to take care of when you can't wash it and keep after it.

Elva: I tried to grow my hair a little bit long after we first got married, but I never did get it really long. It always bothered me being down on my shoulders.

KI: Do you have another picture here to show me?

Elva: This is one I found in my mother's things the other night, too. That is Orson Hall and his wife and their oldest children.

KI: What was her name?

Elva: Her name was Marinda. The daughter that is sitting on his lap is Liz Weist, if you knew Liz. This lady was my grandfather's sister, she was an Allen.

Milt: And the one right behind the mom...

Elva: That's Chloe Hall. She married Ray McConkie.

Milt: And the one right down with the big bow married Glen "Penny" Murray.

KI: What's her name?

Elva: Her name is Marinda, after her mother, and they called her Rin.

Milt: The boy, his name was Dan, Dan Hall. A lot of people didn't know him as Dan, they called him Butch. He married a Morrison.

Elva: Grace Morrison, who died just this last winter. He died several years ago.

KI: You said these were the oldest children, so they had more afterward?

Elva: They had two girls after them.

Milt: They had girl by the name of Nellie and one by the name of Mathel.

KI: They had strange names back then, too, not just now.

Milt: Yeah, not just now. They had strange names then. But Elva took these down to the library last night and they've got copies of them. She left a list of the names of the people. See, there's no names on these.

Elva: I've got to write on the back of this. Do you now Billy Murray?

Milt: From Jensen. He's Barbara Mott's brother-in-law.

Elva: His wife was Barbara Mott's sister and she died with cancer a couple of years ago. I called him and asked him if he had a picture of his grandparents, and he said no. This is his mother.

Milt: So, she's going to give that to him.

Elva: He's going to stop by and I'll give this one to him.

KI: It's good we can have the laser copy, though, because that works really well for us. Is there anything else you can tell me about Maeser?

Milt: Chocolate Rock.

Elva: We used to always spend Easter up at Chocolate Rock, which is right up that mountain.

Milt: Going up the canyon, before you get right into the canyon, up on your left, there.

Elva: There's a big rock that looks like a chocolate, and that's where we always went because the kids could run and play on the rocks. Now, there's houses all around up there, you can't even get to it.

KI: Was it a hike to get up there?

Elva: We went in the wagon with the horses. We borrowed my grandfather's team and the wagon and went that way. My mother wanted a sidewalk at her house when we got moved down to the place that we bought. She remembered seeing flat rocks up by Chocolate Rock. So, my brothers and I and she borrowed Grandpa's horses and the wagon and we went up to Chocolate Rock to get some rocks. Well, they were heavy. My brother just removed them from up there a year or two ago. There was one about this long and this wide and this thick. How we ever loaded it, I don't know, but we did. We had two of them that size, then a lot of smaller ones that made stepping stones.

We got the wagon loaded and we had to cross the Highline Canal. Going up it was a breeze, the horse just went down in the canal and right up. But coming back, my brother Markel was driving the team and he got them down into the canal, but when they started up the other side and all that weight on the wagon, they were having a time. Finally, I don't know what he did, but anyway, it jerked the wagon and I fell out the back and landed in the stream. There wasn't much water in it, but I got wet. Instead of getting out on the side where they went out, I scrambled to the other side. Then I had to wade the stream to get back to the wagon.

KI: I'll bet at the time you were wearing a dress, weren't you?

Elva: Oh, probably.

KI: Do you remember when you started to wear pants? Do you remember what kind of a social situation was going on? Did people say it was a terrible thing for women to wear pants?

Elva: I don't remember exactly. But, you couldn't buy slacks. There were a few women who wore men's overalls if they were gardening and stuff, but my mother and I never did. I think I was in high school when I made my first pair of slacks, when I was in sewing class. I've got

pictures of me in those. But we didn't wear slacks, hardly ever.

Milt: Girls always wore dresses to school and stuff. It was something that they didn't do.

KI: For a long while there, women just didn't appear in public in pants.

Elva: Right. Now you go to a viewing or funeral, lots of people show up in slacks.

Milt: And some of them show up in overalls. The overalls are most generally clean, but maybe that's all they've got, I don't know. As long as it's clean, I guess that's all right.

Elva: Okay, now you tell her about the millers.

Milt: First I better tell her [some background]. I told you about being taken to the mountain when I was eight or nine months old. My mother and my cousin, Beulah Freestone... My Aunt Vilate, she went to Salt Lake to be with a sister that was having a thyroid operation, and in those days that was a very serious thing. So, Jim Freestone's wife was my mother's sister, Vilate, the oldest girl in the Batty family. She went out there and my mother went and stayed with Jim and Vilate's kids and, of course, I was a baby. During the days sometimes, why, they didn't have anything particularly to do, and so they'd hook up the team and fix a little picnic and drive to different places around on the mountain. This one day, in my mother's history it says they'd been somewhere and then they come home and it was early when they come home and she said, "Let's just leave the harnesses on the team and we'll maybe go for another little ride after on the buckboard. And afterward maybe we'll go down to Miss Dick (which was Jack Gamar and Miss Dick, who he was living with down on the Gamar place). Jack Gamar and Miss Dick. He came out of the south. She was a nurse, but he was supposed to die. He had TB or something and he come up into this country for better and they homesteaded a place there on Diamond Mountain, down the draw from Willow Springs, down the draw from the Freestone place.

Anyway, they decided to go, so in Mother's history it says the team didn't act like they wanted to be bridled, but they did get them bridled and they got them hooked up to the buckboard and went down. Theodore Johnson had a place there on Diamond that was all fenced in. He'd raised some alfalfa there. That's neither here nor there. But as they went along, why, she said something had died there along the road and she said that the horses had seen it before, but today, why, they spooked and she jerked on the line. I don't get this straight, just what happened, whether the snaffle bit was broke in the center and the bit came out, or whether the ring on the snaffle bit came loose and hit the other horse and scared them. So, they took off running. Of course, Mother couldn't control them because she only had one line for one horse. The other horse, she didn't have any way to control it. I've been told that Beulah, who was carrying me, my mother told her to throw me out in the sagebrush as we went along so I wouldn't get hurt. Well, they threw me out in the sagebrush.

Leland McNeil, his father, seen the horses running away and he and another fellow, and I never did find out who and Mother never says who the other fellow was, they seen those horses running away, so they took to them and got the horses and come back and gathered Beulah and I guess they had jumped out, too. They brought the buckboard and the horses back to my mother and they got me loaded up in and they said that Uncle Jim was taking care of... In those days

they had what they called community herds of sheep. Different people had little bunches of sheep and they put them together and Jim Freestone took them on his place on the mountain in the summer and pastured them for so much, whatever it was. He was tending them, but when he came back, he had a little Model A Ford, and Mother was worried about me, how I'd been thrown out, so evidently nothing to do but they got in the little pickup and come to town. I don't know how long it must have taken them.

Elva: It would have taken them two to two and a half hours to come, the way the roads used to be, no faster than they could drive.

Milt: Yeah, at least that long. They said they got Dr. Christie up, they got in late at night down there. They said he come to look at me and all I would do was just kick and play. I felt fine and he said that I was fine.

But this Uncle Jim, while I lived there, I lived there off and on during the summers. Like I've said before about the strawberries, they had the strawberry patch and I loved to crawl down between those rows of strawberries and eat them. Their house sit up on the hill and then the garden sit down below and you could walk out on the porch and see anything right there in the garden. They said if I was quiet for a little while, why, they'd look and there I'd be on my belly crawling down the rows, eating strawberries.

Then, at night, in those days, why, they had some milk cows up there and they'd milk those cows and put the milk out in pans, out on the table, so the mice couldn't get up to them or anything. But when you turned the coal oil lamps on at night, on the table, then the millers [moths] would come. They'd go around and around the lamp. Down into those pans of milk they'd go. I don't remember doing it, but they've always told it on me, that Uncle Jim would give me a penny apiece for every one of them that I would eat! Of course, they were covered with cream, so that was pretty good, and they said that I always used to say, "Do I have to eat wings and all?" For a penny apiece, eat them millers! Evidently, I ate them; I ate them millers. They must not have ever hurt me or anything.

KI: Just a little bit of extra protein, huh?

Milt: It was a little extra protein, that was it, and they was all covered with cream. But, once a week they'd take that cream. They had what we called a milk house, or a cellar kind of a deal, and it was always cold in that place there. It was up by the ranch house and it was always cold. There was lots of quakers and chokecherry trees along on the south side of the house and it was real shady and nice where this milk house was. They would skim the cream off their pans in the mornings and put it into a five-gallon or ten-gallon can. Then on Saturdays, most generally on Saturdays, why, they'd bring the cream to town. That was their cash crop. I imagine they'd get two or three or four dollars out of the amount of cream they had.

KI: Did they take it to Calders?

Milt: Calders, probably at that time. I'll tell you another thing that I remember about that Calders Creamery. There was a fellow by the name Elmer James that worked for Calders and he had one leg. The other one was off right below his knee and he had a wooden peg on it, a wooden leg. He

worked down there in the creamery. I remember I went down there any number of times. You see these curds in the stores, where you can buy packages of curds? Well, down there, before they put them in packages, or actually, I don't even know what they did with them in those days, or whether they compressed them and made cheese out of them or what they did, I don't know. But they were in big slabs. Oh, they were probably two inches thick or so and they were curds. They were warm and they were delicious. I'd go down there and Elmer would give me a handful of those curds. I'll always remember how good they were.

KI: I've never had warm ones.

Elva: When I used to make cottage cheese, when we had a cow, I always liked it warm.

KI: Just fresh, huh?

Milt: Just fresh, yeah. I've got a Calders pop bottle in here. You've probably seen some of them around.

KI: I have seen one of those. What else did they make? Did they make ice cream and keep it there?

Milt: Oh, yeah, they made ice cream and butter.

KI: Would people make their own butter at the time? If you were selling cream, would you keep enough cream for your own use, or would you turn it in and take some of the price back in cheese and butter?

Milt: You'd get a pound or two back [in products] plus so much money. But before that, I remember that a lot of people churned, well, her folks, they used to churn their own. We used to churn by shaking a bottle, shake it until it separated and went together. My mother made her own butter, absolutely. Her folks did.

Elva: My mother could always made good butter.

Milt: She could made *good* butter.

Elva: I tried to make butter.

Milt: It was never as good as her mother's.

Elva: I could never work it good enough and wash it good enough to get all the buttermilk out of it. And it would go funny-tasting in just a few days.

Milt: But her mother...

Elva: My mother could make it and bring it and our kids would say, "Oh, Grandma brought the

butter, didn't she?"

Milt: They was tickled to death.

Elva: My folks didn't always go down to the creamery with it. Bobby Aycock used to pick it up. He would come around on certain days of the week, maybe only one day a week, but he would pick up the cream, and we would get butter, if Mom hadn't made any, and cheese from him.

KI: Did they have different kinds of cheese?

Milt: Oh, no, it was just cheese, just a block of cheese.

KI: No Swiss cheese or mozzarella or anything?

Elva: No, it was just regular cheese.

Milt: Regular cheese, that's all we had. It was good for us. We enjoyed every bit of it, I'll tell you, we did, we enjoyed it.

KI: Is there another story you wanted to tell me? You've got some more pictures here, Elva.

Elva: I was just going to show you this. This was our chapel when it was first built. That's my Grandmother Caldwell, she was not a member, and my little brother, Markel, and my mother and me. Then a neighbor girl. I think I had on a red dress

KI: Where was the church located, about what address?

Elva: It was right over there where the Maeser Water office is.

KI: That was a pretty good-sized building, wasn't it?

Milt: It was a nice building. After we got married and I got back active in the church, over on the south end of this building, there was a room down underneath there that was never finished. It was just dirt in there. It was a room, but nothing had ever been done with it. When they got me in to be a scoutmaster, why, I told them I'd be a scoutmaster, but I wouldn't go to church and I wouldn't be a priesthood leader or anything like that, but I'd be a scoutmaster and be the best scoutmaster I possibly could for those boys because my brother, Carl, was a tremendous scoutmaster and I always enjoyed him.

But anyway, this room that I'm talking about, we decided to make a scout room out of it. So, Ferron Hacking and Glen Oaks and myself and a few of the others, we got together and we got wheelbarrows and we got all the dirt out of it and poured a floor in it. I went to Kamas and bought the knotty pine boards. They were just six or eight inches wide, or whatever they were at that time. Then we put them together. We made a beautiful scout room down there. On the floor we made designs for shuffleboard, two or three different games could be played. Then in the top of the ceiling, we cut two holes, one on the southwest corner and one on the southeast corner, I

guess it was, up on the ceiling. We fixed it so we had motors on it. On these cables that we attached to them, we could let part of that ceiling down and put scout equipment on those. Our scout troop, we bought wrestling mats and punch bags and all kinds of things.

Where we got this money was, at the time, when the oil boom was on, why, the oil wells was buying sawdust. I had a one-ton truck, I think, at that time, that blue Ford, and we would take that and take a bunch of sacks. I had got some big Army griddles, and we'd take those and go to the mountains to these old sawmills and sack up sawdust and tie them. We sold, I wouldn't dare to say how many hundred sacks of that sawdust that we sold to the oil wells and got a dollar a bag out of it, as I remember. We bought lots of camping equipment for the boys, for us to use when we went on scout camps.

Elva: Back then they let scouts have projects to get their own money.

Milt: When I was released as scoutmaster from them, my scout troop had over \$1200 in the bank. That was before they started to assess the wards for scouts. Our money that had to be taken up for scouts, why, we took it out of that fund. The parents didn't have to come up with anything in my troop. Some of the other troops, why, I don't know how they did. Maybe the parents still had to come up with so much money to have their boys in scouting. But we had money to take care of that. We sold light bulbs and we sold candy, flowers, artificial flowers. We sold everything. Of course, they don't let them do that anymore now. You can't do that anymore.

KI: You can't go door to door.

Milt: Yeah. We went door to door and sold all that kind of stuff and we made pretty good money.

KI: How big was the Maeser Ward? How big was the troop that you had? What was the area that it took in?

Elva: At that time, Maeser Second Ward had been formed. It was anything north of the chapel and up Dry Fork was Maeser Second Ward. Anything south of the chapel and on the way out to the cemetery and stuff that was in the First Ward.

KI: The Maeser Cemetery?

Milt: Yeah. That's what they were.

Elva: When we first moved here, it was all Maeser Ward, the whole area. There were quite a few people, but they weren't all active and coming out.

Milt: Same as today. Not everybody active. But there's lots more people here now.

Elva: We've been in five wards and stayed right here, and in three stakes. We were in the old Uintah Stake; we were in the Ashley Stake, and they made the Maeser Stake. When we came home from our mission, in 1978, in the spring, we got here the day that they formed the Maeser Ward. We went to the meeting that night and they formed the Maeser Stake.

KI: Where did kids get baptized? Was there a baptismal font here or did you go out to a canal?

Milt: We went to the tabernacle.

Elva: My great-grandfather baptized me in the canal.

Milt: Show her that other picture, that 1879 picture.

Elva: That was with my mother's things, and I think that might have been taken when they were ready to leave that chapel and go to the new stake center.

KI: This was the last time church was held there? Do you remember when this building was built?

Elva: I was about four or five years old there.

KI: And that's when it was built?

Elva: It was brand new, they had been building it.

KI: So what year was that then?

Elva: That would have been 1930. They probably started it in '28 and finished it by 1930.

KI: Where did they go to church before then, do you remember?

Elva: There was a little building over there by where Ked Caldwell lives, a little farther south and back up in. It wasn't very big.

KI: I know they used to have a place they called the Mud Temple. They used to have school in there as well as church meetings, but the roof fell in. That would have been long before you came around, in the 1800s. I just wondered what replaced it.

Tell me, you said the kids went down to the tabernacle to be baptized if they didn't get baptized in the canal?

Milt: Unless they were baptized in the canal here. If they wanted to be baptized in the winter, why, I imagine they would have to go to the tabernacle to be. That's where I was baptized, was in the tabernacle.

KI: Do you remember much about that?

Milt: Really, I don't remember a whole lot about it, actually, no. But I know who baptized me and who confirmed me.

KI: Who was that?

Milt: Joe Winward baptized me and Charlie Hardy confirmed me. Charlie Hardy had a boy by the name of Norwood Hardy, who I was a counselor to over in the Maeser Ward, when he was the bishop.

KI: I've been told stories about when it was time to baptize children, younger children, they would just kind of gather them up and take them over to the tabernacle. Nobody made a big deal of it, you just kind of went down there and got baptized.

Milt: It wasn't any big deal. It was kind of, Lord, forgive me to say it, but it was kind of a cruddy place.

KI: Oh, I've seen it! It was clear down in a dark, old place. That old cement font.

Elva: Well, when I was baptized, they had a day for the baptisms for that month. They always came on the Saturday, the week before Fast Sunday. My birthday was on Saturday and they had baptized the week before. My mother, bless her heart, she got Grandpa Caldwell's horse and she rode over to see Bishop Bingham to see why I couldn't be baptized on my eighth birthday by my great-grandfather Allen. She got permission. He always knew who I was, but I don't think I was ever interviewed as such, but she got permission. Then she rode the horse down and told Grandpa Allen that we'd be down that afternoon. It was in the first of July, in the summertime. It was nice and warm. That swimming hole that was right down just a little bit from Grandpa Allen's house was full of kids that were swimming. He took me by the hand and went across and the water was only maybe that deep, but he baptized me. There's something that's bothered me since I've been to baptisms. I don't know who the witnesses were.

Milt: There wasn't any witnesses at all.

Elva: But I was baptized and then the next morning, Uncle Ed Bodily confirmed me. He always did the blessings and the confirmings and everything for my mother because my dad wasn't a member. But she tried to keep us on the straight and narrow and she succeeded with some of us.

KI: That's the way it usually is in most families. We've talked for almost another hour here, do you have any more stories? But if you're finished, that's good enough for me.

Elva: I think so.

KI: I really appreciate you telling me these things.

